10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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ŋillatun, the tribal religious ceremonial, prayers are directed to chau chau, God as the father of all. "We believed that ŋənechén came to earth when we had done our planting and that he moved through the fields then; that even today he wanders about on the earth and does good to people." With God, it was believed, lived a woman, known as ray kuʃe, but she was not a goddess, informants insisted. She is addressed in the prayers of the ŋillatun as papai, the mother of all. "That was our old belief," said a woman in her late fifties; "today we believe that ray chau has living with Him, in addition to ray kuʃe, a virgin who has a son called Jesus. Ray kuʃe wears a blue dress; ray chau, a blue chiripe [pants] and a red poncho. I do not know how the virgin is dressed. There is only one God. He rules the world and gives us good health and food and long life. I liked our old way best, when we believed in ray chau and ray kuʃe." 776

There was no belief in minor deities. Something akin to veneration was shown to stones resembling figurines. (Whether the belief is an old one was not ascertained.) The cacique in Collón Curá is said to have in his possession a stone, approximately 12 inches high, that has red-blue eyes and red lips. At the ŋillatun a new silk band is tied about its forehead and secured at the back of the head with a knot, just as men secure their headbands; a sash is tied about its waist; a silver knife placed gaucho-style at its back; and a small arrowhead put in its arms. "I am afraid of the stone; it is sacred. Some years ago one of the sons of the cacique sold it to a man from Buenos Aires but advised him to safeguard it behind several locks. This the man did. But one night the figurine walked out, killed the Buenos Aires man, and came back to the seller's home in Collón Curá. In the morning it made a terrifying noise; it so frightened the man who had sold it that he died the following day." When we asked where in Collón Curá we might see the figurine, the informant replied, "It is a dangerous thing for you to try to see it. Stay around until the time of our ŋillatun when everyone attending the ŋillatun can see it. But be respectful toward it. One time a woman like you [non-Araucanian] was invited to take part in it [the ŋillatun]. She said, 'Why should I take part in it? I have no interest in the ŋillatun.' And then she made some flippant remarks about the ŋillatun and also about the figurine. She went away. An electric storm rose. Lightning struck her. She fell down and was dead for a few hours. After that the right side of her face was lamed." She added, "I know of no other sacred stones in use." 778

Old Araucanian men and women today express awe when they come upon two weather-beaten stones representing figures found in 778 781

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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778 the yard of a non-Araucanian (pl. 76, 5, 6); they step backward and refuse to touch them. Some scold because the stones are not in possession of Araucanians; none knows the origin of the stones or their significance. One stone was found at the edge of a high cliff; the other had fallen from there into a dry river bed.

PRIVATE PRAYERS, PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS

782 Private prayers are said on many occasions today, as formerly.
788 They are said for a safe landing before crossing water; when a thunderstorm rages; when starting a fire; to prevent floods and famine; for a good harvest; and for success in fishing. To avert dangers of an electric storm, Kolupan drops on the fire a pinch of wheat, which he has reserved for this purpose, and prays, "Oh, God! You who created the earth protect me, your son, and your people, also. Let this thunderstorm pass by, and let it do me no harm." A woman in her sixties throws on the fire a pinch of anything edible she may happen to have in her house—"it may be wheat, yerba maté, peas, beans, or sugar," and prays. "When I have done this the storm invariably passes by," she added.

To prevent floods every person—man, woman, and child—who walks or rides past a barren plot of land near Pucura must go onto the plot and perform the ŋoaltun (pray while dancing on one leg). The plot is about 9 yards in diameter. Dancing is done within the plot and three times around its circumference. "I saw my father and mother do the ŋoaltun," said a 16-year-old girl; "I did not have to do it, for I did not pass the place; I merely went with them to the place, and then turned around and came home." Kolupan demonstrated the ŋoaltun by placing one knee under the other, and hopping forward.

No informant claimed personal supernatural powers; nor did any know of anyone who claimed such powers, except sorcerers.

TRIBAL RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL: THE ŊILLATUN

796 The tribal religious ceremonial is a public community prayer accompanied by sacrifice, known as the ŋillatun. No complete sequential account of the manner in which it was conducted in the early days, or of the modified form of today, was obtained. The following information, however, was collected.

Old Araucanians speak of the ceremonial as ŋillatun, or ŋillapun; young Araucanians and non-Araucanians almost exclusively as the camaruka; an occasional person calls it by the Spanish word "roga-

12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
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ancestral spirits "at rest." *Alwe* serves to characterize wandering spirits of the dead, as in the concept *witranalwe*, a soul or spirit doomed to, or in danger of, earthbound existence, as the captive of a witch. *Pellu* is used almost exclusively for the soul which is felt to linger around the corpse during the days between death and final burial. The term *wesa pellu*, evil spirit, suggests that the soul can become bothersome and even dangerous if it lingers too long.

Encounters with Malevolent Forces

Malevolent forces are everywhere present, but sentient contact with them is seldom direct or at close quarters. When it is, the individual is almost always overwhelmed and dies. People found dead along the road or in the fields and woods are considered the victims of direct and overwhelming contact with the forces of evil. More often, however, persons merely have brushes with the supernatural—narrow escapes—and live to tell of their experience. In dreams one also encounters malevolent spirits who might capture one's soul under the direction of a *kalku*. But there are also beneficent spirits in the dream world, encounters with which are taken as a good omen. The most frequently observed supernatural agents, though, are malevolent night birds, seen or heard near one's house. Their observation, or the mere suspicion of their presence, has an electric effect in the household, and it is on these occasions that the most detailed and hair-raising stories are told about encounters with the supernatural. A few examples follow.

One night we were sitting around the fire, wondering if we should go to bed. Suddenly, the family became quite still and alert and immediately rushed outside the house, some carrying pieces of firewood. They threw sticks at a tree near the dwelling and shouted the name of a bird, *wuthwuth*. Although I ran outside too, I could neither see nor hear the bird. Presently, we all returned to the fireside and my hosts continued to reminisce about supernatural experiences for several hours, postponing sleep until almost dawn. While all encounters with night birds are not as dramatic as this one was, they never fail to invoke a restless and anxious feeling among the people, which